



## City of Seattle

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### **Seattle Neighborhood Planning Outreach and Engagement Earns Governor's Smart Communities Award**

City of Seattle has won a *Judges Merit Award* for its innovative civic engagement efforts for Neighborhood Planning Updates and Status Check. Gov. Chris Gregoire announced the winners of her 2010 Smart Communities Awards for creating livable communities in Washington State.

Seattle's *Judges Merit Award* is jointly earned by the Seattle Planning Commission, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, and the City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development for Neighborhood Planning Outreach and Engagement. It highlights two distinct and innovative approaches to public participation; The Planning Outreach Liaison work and the "Status Check" process (specifically the virtual meeting hosted by the Planning Commission).

"As we prepared for the 2009 neighborhood plan updates, we recognized the need for a broader dialogue and a more inclusive outreach and engagement process," stated Diane Sugimura, Director of the City's Department of Planning and Development, "In response, two unique efforts were used in conjunction with traditional outreach methods resulting in the participation of more than 6,000 people in the review of 27 neighborhood plans bringing many new voices into neighborhood planning".

"Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement starts with building relationships between the City and ALL of its residents. This is the foundation of our strategy in SE Seattle. We are honored by the acknowledgement that the Governor understands how important it is to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged in public policy." Stella Chao, Director of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods.

"The Commission wanted to improve civic engagement by using innovative technology to broaden the discussion and tap ideas from people who don't usually attend community meetings" explained Commission Chair Josh Brower, "In all about 350 people participated in the five in person meetings we co-hosted. We had an additional 4,576 people participate in an online virtual meeting."

"This effort engaged people across the city." stated Mayor McGinn, "The dialogue was rich with insight and showed a deep sense of community pride and commitment to improving Seattle neighborhoods. This award from the Governor acknowledges and celebrates great work of city staff and the Planning Commission to broaden public outreach and civic engagement in planning our great City."